

SPRINGSTIMES

Your Sandy Springs News Source

Greetings!



In general, residents like to have an idea of where their money is going. I'd like to show you.

The bulk of this year's spending is contained in the General Fund. The good news is the General Fund is expected to have 9.1 percent more revenues this coming year. This is because of growth in the community.

This also reflects the first collection of the insurance premium taxes which the State collected last year. In the past, this revenue went to Fulton County.

What are the major components of the budget?

Public safety occupies a central spot. The most important function of any government is to protect its residents. Thirty-one percent of the budget is dedicated to public safety.

The budget reflects several new initiatives by the City. The repaving of our most dilapidated streets is slated for \$6 million. The cost of asphalt is rising as part of the energy problem, and so it makes sense to repave many streets before prices go even higher.

Funding continues for the Abernathy Parkway project. The City is acquiring parcels for the park portion of project and is committed to a successful completion of the Greenway, which will add public enjoyment to the Georgia Department of Transportation's (GDOT's) road widening project.

Everyone is concerned about traffic. There are never enough dollars to fix the problem. There is nobody in Sandy Springs who has escaped the bottleneck at Roswell Road and I-285. GDOT is not ready to widen the bridge. So the City proposes to tunnel under I-285 to create an alternate route to Roswell Road. The contract has been let to determine the feasibility.

Hammond Drive between Glenridge Drive and Roswell Road is another bottleneck, and here, too, a contract has been let to address the solution. Sometimes traffic improvements result from minor changes. The City is evaluating which intersections merit improvements to accelerate movement with such changes.

The City will be considering impact fees on new development within the coming months. The planned addition of several new high-rises in the vicinity of Hammond Drive and Peachtree Dunwoody is an example of an area that will require more lanes, and new development will do its share via impact fees to pay for the needed improvements.

The budget includes funds to upgrade existing park facilities as well as to acquire an additional 26 acres of property off Dalrymple Road. There is also money to do a master plan for the gorgeous land the City has acquired along the Chattahoochee River above the Morgan Falls dam. The City also determined to develop a dog park where pets can enjoy themselves.

The budget addresses a serious issue which has little glamour—storm water drainage. Many citizens have complained of faulty drainage. Moreover, state and federal requirements call for ever-more separation of storm water from our sewage systems. The budget contains \$450,000 for repairs and to develop a long-term solution.

As you can see, it will be a busy year in the City of Sandy Springs. We look forward to serving you.

Mayor Eva Galambos, Ph.D.
City of Sandy Springs

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The Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda—Envisioning a Bright Future



The Community Development Department sought residents' input for many months for the Comprehensive Plan.

A clear vision of what the future will—and should—hold is just as important for cities as it is for individuals and businesses alike. Months of Citizen Advisory Committee, staff and consultant labor and a series of public input sessions helped formulate a shared vision for future

growth and development in the City of Sandy Springs. The result of this monumental planning process was the creation of the City's Community Agenda, which completed the second phase of the development of the City's first Comprehensive Plan.

For Recreation and Parks, the Community Agenda includes plans for infrastructure improvements, new park development and land acquisition. Packaged with the Community Agenda are 25 maps and illustrations, including a Town Center Grid Network Map, a Proposed Land Use Map and a list of planned Capital Improvement Projects.

Sandy Springs staff submitted the comprehensive plan to the Atlanta Regional Commission on July 6. Staff expects the state will review, provide comments and approve the Community Agenda by November.

To view a copy of the City of Sandy Springs' Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda, please visit www.sandyspringsga.org, and click on City Government, then Comprehensive Plan.

"The development of the City's first Comprehensive Plan, independent of Fulton County, is the culmination of many months of collaboration between our elected officials, the Citizen Advisory Committee, the residents of Sandy Springs and the state of Georgia. The Plan describes the vision, policies and capital projects that will shape the quality of life and livability of the City for the next 20 years. The completion of the Comprehensive Plan also reflects yet another important achievement in our new City's progress."

Vann McNeill, Deputy Director Community Development

In order to set goals, stakeholders and staff had to understand where the City is in terms of existing conditions, demographics and statistics. In January, the first phase of the Comprehensive Plan—a thorough community assessment—was completed and submitted to the state, paving the way for the Community Agenda.

Knowing the status of the City allows us to better determine where we want to go and how we can get there. The Community Agenda portion of the comprehensive planning process establishes the City's collective vision for the future and outlines a strategy for achieving it. The 238-page Community Agenda document offers guidelines and policies to guide Sandy Springs' growth and development through the year 2027. It outlines a framework for redevelopment, recognized as "priority #1" for the City and calls for the creation of a Town Center. It also addresses needs for intersection improvements at traffic "hot spots," especially along Roswell Road, and installation of sidewalks for safer, easier pedestrian travel.



Budget Contains Upgrades But No New Taxes

The 2008 fiscal year budget is aimed at improving public safety, roads and parks—all without a hike in the millage rate. The City Council approved the budget at its June 19 meeting after several public meetings soliciting resident input. The budget calls for a property tax rate of 4.731 mills, the same as the 2007 rate.

“Our City has thrived this past year under a healthy economy,” said Mayor Eva Galambos. “This budget reflects that. As a result, we’ll be able to get these new projects off the ground and improve life in Sandy Springs with the same millage rate as last year.”

Under the City’s charter, residents must vote in a referendum before the government can increase the millage rate. But a boom in new construction raised the total property tax valuation during 2007, making a referendum unnecessary.

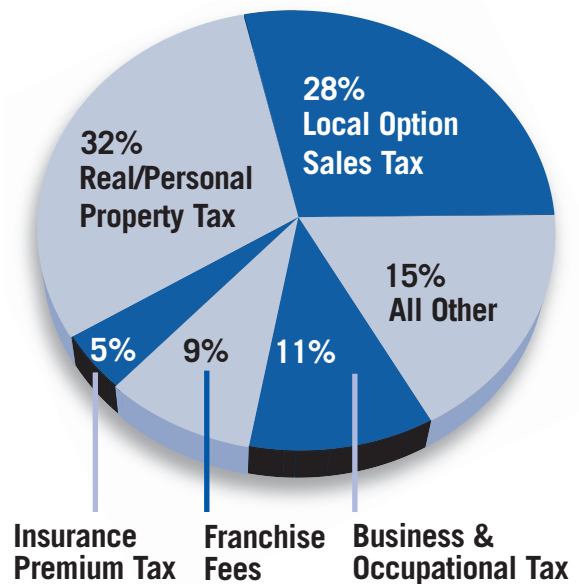
“All of this growth in new construction has been a tremendous boost to our revenue,” Mayor Galambos said. “That will pay off in noticeable improvements for all the residents of Sandy Springs.”

The budget will fund emergency stormwater repairs, the E-911 intergovernmental services agreement and an EMS medical partnership with Emory University. The City’s repaving efforts will get a \$6.5 million shot in the arm.

In Public Safety, the City will add a new quick-response vehicle, six paramedics and eight police personnel. The Police Department will begin a volunteer reserve program. Citizens can also expect upgrades in the City’s appearance, with more funding for litter and trash removal, street sweeping and grass trimming. Park enhancements include work on the Sandy Springs Tennis Center (formerly North Fulton Tennis Center) and the ball fields at Morgan Falls Park.

“We’re definitely building on the success of 2007,” the Mayor said. “And we’re holding the line against new taxes. You’re seeing responsible government at work.”

ANTICIPATED REVENUES



DESCRIPTION/AMOUNT

Real/Personal Property Tax.....	\$25,172,000*
Local Option Sales Tax	\$22,500,000
Business & Occupational Tax.....	\$8,934,000
Franchise Fees	\$7,058,000
Insurance Premium Tax	\$3,800,000
All Other	\$11,954,000

**Based on Fulton County's estimated Digest*

TOTAL REVENUES \$79,418,000

ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES

AMOUNT/DESCRIPTION

\$15,365,000	Capital Investment*
\$14,881,038	Police
\$9,770,647	General Operations*
\$9,506,920	Public Works
\$9,441,805	Fire Department
\$6,722,120	Community Development
\$5,900,000	Contingency
Finance (\$2,036,824)	
Municipal Court (\$1,404,227)	
Facilities and Buildings (\$1,343,472)	
Recreation (\$1,256,496)	
Legal Services (\$766,000)	
City Manager's Office (\$659,777)	
City Clerk's Office (\$199,904)	
City Council (\$163,770)	

**General Operations contains Capital Investment, Insurance & Professional Studies.*

TOTAL EXPENDITURES \$79,418,000

Police Department Celebrates in Style

On the evening of Thursday, June 28, 2007, the Sandy Springs Police Department celebrated its first anniversary at Police Headquarters with much fanfare. The Mayor, councilmembers, city manager, other dignitaries and numerous guests, family members and friends all turned out to wish our men and women in black hearty congratulations on a year full of accomplishments. Mayor Eva Galambos kicked off the event.

City Manager John McDonough touched on several important statistics such as total major crime (which includes robbery, burglary and theft) being down one fourth over our first year compared to the same period last year. The force also averages investigating 600 traffic accidents each month. In May, the HEAT unit, consisting of two officers, made 30 DUI arrests and issued 115 citations above normal patrol citations in this area.

Police Chief Gene Wilson spoke about the unique aspects of the department: Each officer attends a three-day ethics class to ensure the integrity of the department; experience of our officers is a very high average of 10 years; and each police vehicle is armed with an Automated External Defibrillator. Each officer is trained in CPR and AED use.

At the end of the city manager's speech, the flag that had flown at police headquarters was retired by the Sandy Springs Honor Guard and will be mounted and hung inside. All cars, including K-9 units, trucks, including the crime scene van, motorcycles, bikes and equipment was on display, including all items purchased by the Friends of Sandy Springs.

Resurfacing Project Begins to Correct Road Issues



Crews prepare Old Creek Trail for resurfacing.

The City of Sandy Springs completed its first-ever resurfacing project in July just four short weeks after it began. Eleven roads were included in the six-mile project.

- 1 Mountain Brook Way from Edgewater Drive to cul-de-sac,
- 2 Old Creek Trail from Mountain Brook Way to Heards Creek Drive,
- 3 Tanacrest Drive from Bridgewater Drive to River Valley Road,
- 4 Tanacrest Circle from Tanacrest Court to cul-de-sac,
- 5 Old Riverside Drive from Riverside Drive to Riverside Drive,
- 6 Benita Trace from Riverside Trace to cul-de-sac,
- 7 Spalding Drive from Roswell Road to Dalrymple Road,
- 8 Bridgewater Drive from Winding Creek Trail to the cul-de-sac,
- 9 Hope Road from Roswell Road to Dunwoody Place,
- 10 Roberts Drive from Roswell Road to Dunwoody Place and
- 11 Dunwoody Place from Roswell Road to Northridge Road.

"We are very excited about this project," said Mayor Eva Galambos. "We did a study of all 330 miles of our roads when the City was incorporated and found that 80 percent scored below standard. This was our first comprehensive project that began to correct some of the issues with our road system."

This project is funded in part from the City's general fund and from the state's Local Assistance Roads Program (LARP). The projects were held over from Fulton County. C.W. Matthews was the contractor for the project.

The City's Web site was an integral part in providing updates to the construction schedule and maps of affected areas. In fact, maps of the roads are still on the site and can be found at www.sandyspringsga.org.

Contact Us

Sandy Springs Web site: www.sandyspringsga.org

Sandy Springs Call Center: 770.730.5600

Sandy Springs Fax Number: 770.206.1420